



SONGS AND SONNETS.





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I thirst, I thirst, as for snow December,
The moon for a cloud, as the grass for dew;
I thirst, as desert no skies remember,
As passion for silence—I thirst for you.

REALITY.

I dreamt of joy that could not die,
Of rare, imperishable grace;
Since then my living ecstasy,
Has been the beauty of her face.

I sang of love that would not change,
Of reverence no law may teach;
I prove them, yet, divinely strange,
Her dearest self I never reach.

DISCOVERY.

I found her where no earthly feet
 Had ever trod
The unearthly snows, where pine-woods sweet
 Stand close to God.

I found her where the ice-winds rise
 From sea to hill,
Where birds proclaim a paradise,
 But love is still.

I found her where the snow and sky
 And she seemed one,
Since when we love—till she, or I,
 Or God be done.

TRANSLATION FROM VICTOR HUGO.

("Puisqu'ici bas.")

Since every spirit here
Gives to some one
All that it reckons dear:
Music, love, sun.

Since there is naught on earth
But to love grows,
Yielding its wealth, or dearth,
Thorns, or a rose.

Since April leaves the wood
Murmuring of heaven,
Since peace to darkest mood
By sleep is given.

Since to each leafy dell
Spring sends a bird,
And in the dainty shell
White pearls are stirred.

Since, as the river lies
Close to the shore,
Waves, though of sorrow, rise
Kissing it o'er.

Therefore I give to thee
All that is best,
All that love has of me—
Worthless the rest.



SINCE TO EACH LEAFY DELL
SPRING SENDS A BIRD.



Thought, take each thought anew;
Though they be sad,
Sweet are the tears in dew,
Mine I have had.

Take every deathless vow,
All gloom, all praise,
Even my past, my now,
Take all my days.

Rapture in whose delight
No falsehood rang,
Take all the truth and right
In songs I sang.

Take, too, my soul which drifts
Helmless, undone;
Be thou the star who lifts
Love where love shone.

Also, my muse who sleeps
Prone at thy shrine,
Worn with the tears she weeps,
Tears that are thine.

Take, last, this heart I bear,
Darling, mine own.
Love would leave nothing there
Once he were flown.

YOUR FATE.

Strange, silent love, whose eyes mine scarcely met,
Whose image yet pursues me till I die,
When to our lips the enchanted cup was set,
What angel swept you with his witchery?

Had you foreseen that ever at your side
A shade might stand to deepen life with love,
Would you have raised the chalice? or defied
A moment's glow your destiny to move?

Now 'tis too late. You nevermore will lose
The full, reiterating note of care;
A strong relentless dream you did not choose
Waits for your soul—to clothe it with despair.

But—stronger still, and stranger than all dream
Of vain, persistent, passionate desire,
A light shall break, a spirit-radiance gleam,
Lifting, enfolding you with mystic fire.

Flame: it shall compass you with joy divine,
Round you, above, within you and beneath:
All that you are shall be the heart and shrine
Of love more vast, more exquisite than death.

DAWN.

Night, with her passionate secret
Of day-dream, of song, of desire,
Measureless heartfelt of silence,
Enchantment, invisible fire—
Rapt, in her ecstasied vigil
Distraught by no vision of scorn;
Lover, beloved, god and idol,
She waits the caresses of morn.

Light, on the hush of their dream-world,
He steals to their peril and bliss;
Nearer, impalpably dearer,
She suffers his virginal kiss;
Blinded with love, at his breast,
In the sun of his worshipping eyes,
Lover, beloved, god and idol,
She shivers and, wondering, dies.



To stand where trouble, where the shock and fret
Of living strike upon my breast, not yours ;
To touch life's narrowest and still beget
More room for you, more air and loftier hours.

To think your doubts away, to fling a smile
For you upon all time, to challenge fate
With soul and face impenetrable, while
Your heart obeys her helm, inviolate.

To be your faith which shall not fail nor shrink,
The secret of your hope, the constant eyes
You fix upon your star, though on the brink
Of fruitless pain, or vainer sacrifice.

To bring you peace, to minister by ways
That only silence feels and silence knows,
To give and ask not, suffer less than praise,
Yet always love you—thus my friendship grows.

AROLLA.

Radiant snows and frozen outline
Rise against the summer blue,
White unearthliness extending,
Piercing dream and cloudland through.

In our ears the rushing music
Of the torrent's flood and flight,
At our feet the pines, the glamour,
All the witchery of night.

Far beyond, where voices come not,
Nor the faintest earth-note jars,
Shines the spirit of Arolla
From the silence and the stars.

BEYOND.

O love, to thy haven of havens
We come with our worshipping eyes,
And ever thy loveliness draws us
With inviolate ecstasies.

We dream, and we breathe, and we utter
The magic and thoughts that are thine ;
We tremble : in touching life's water,
We drink of life's passionate wine.

But stronger, and deeper, and purer,
Outshining the stars and their fire,
Thy spirit has hold of our spirit,
Thy snows are the sum of desire.

OUT OF REACH.

Laden dreams of swift emotion,
Light intent which cleaves the sky
Cold, enkindling fierce devotion,
Burning thoughts that chill, and die;

All of passion : hell and heaven,
All of silence in a word,
All of language rent or given
By a message never heard ;

These we touch, and hold, possessing,
But, beyond—nor yours, nor mine—
Bends an angel, heart-caressing,
Strange, intangible, divine.

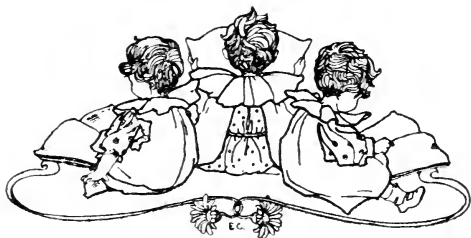
THE PRAYER OF 'SIDDÂRTHA.'

Give me all sorrow,
All weight of dark despair,
Give me the burden
Of sin, the poisoned air ;
All that oppresses,
That makes of earth a hell,
Be it my portion,
For I can bear it well.

Bid peace o'er-shadow
Their minds who toil in vain,
Grant them sweet slumber
While I endure their pain.
Calm the impassioned—
Their wild, remorseful breast ;
Give me its terror :
A past that will not rest.

Lift from the wanderer
The curse that kills the heart,
Take from the loving
The agony to part.
Snatch from the struggler
The bitterness of strife,
Call home the weary,
Give me the longer life.

Cast here the darkness
Of guilt, the sting of shame,
And let some soul rise
The whiter for my blame.
Give them their heaven,
Though mine I never greet,
Lost and, for ever,
I shall have touched thy Feet.



LOVE'S IMAGE.

Inexorable love, whom life, nor loss
Of slighter loves can injure through mischance,
Whose proud, pure, passionate reiteration,
Whose length and strength of loving is the cross,
The glory of your world ;—omniscient sea,
By all that universe of joy not mine,
By every anguish wrung from love divine,—
Image of love—accomplish love in me.

HEART OF NIGHT.

Undying silences, diviner breath
Of spirit-laden, consecrated night,
Control and save me, rise before the death
My soul abhors in breaking to the light.

Stay that last agony: the sense of things,
The hostile nearness of a deadly sphere,
Which threatens ever, ever pressing brings—
A curse on reverence and pity here.

Widen my world—pervade it with your own,
Banish the tyranny of narrowing need,
Stifling the clamour of this nature known,—
Lift me to love: and consummate my creed.

BEGGARS AT LIFE'S BANQUET.

I dare to love you. Nothing can avail ;

I dare to thirst for life's forbidden wine.

Though every other light from you must fail,

This moment, winged with radiant death, is mine.

The world and hope divide us,—yet I come ;

For one immortal instant love is all.

No honour bids me lie, or strikes me dumb,

We stand confessed of love—the barriers fall.

I hold you fast before the scorching hell

Of man's unalterable, fierce disdain ;

You hold my passion for this one farewell,

This death-and-bridal feast of love and pain.

What if we shrink ? who understand the worst.

It is the end ; the choice our own. We go.

White shines the cup—Hush !—pure, as from the first

That once it touched our lips is all we know.

TO THOSE WHO SERVE.

Fear not that hope undone
And failure undergone,
When born of perfect aim,
Are marks for shame.

Not so. In love's renown
The prize, the purest crown,
Are laid beside the loss—
The deadly cross.

Fruition, peace, delight
Are not for those who fight;
They ask no gain to prove
Their faith in love.

Enough for them to hold:
Eternal love shall fold
The leaves of hope unblest
Upon his breast.

A COMRADE.

Though I may never reach that far ideal,
That topmost peak which draws my spirit higher,
Though I may never touch the snow-clad hills,
The perfect stainlessness of my desire ;

Still, on the level where my life is cast,
Yearning towards heights which never can be mine,
Some gentle messenger may leave awhile
Those distant fields, within my sphere to shine.

Some white-robed presence, moving through the gloom,
Taking my hand, half God, half little child,
May with his eyes, so lately bent on heaven,
Lift those of mine so often earth beguiled,—

Till, as he leads, around my spirit steal
Kingdoms of strength I only dreamed might be,
Till, in his grasp, the sword of love shall strike
Dead the despair between those hills and me.



SOME WHITE-ROBED PRESENCE, MOVING THROUGH THE GLOOM
TAKING MY HAND, HALF GOD, HALF LITTLE CHILD
MAY WITH HIS EYES SO LATELY BENT ON HEAVEN
LIFT THOSE OF MINE, SO OFTEN EARTH-BEGUILED.

A CALL TO ARMS.

When you stand at the mercy of passionate dream,
Unshrouding a day that is done,
When the keen-headed scorpions of memory seem
To riddle the shield you had won;
When you fight alone for a front of stone—
Forget not : freedom called.

Though a phalanx from heaven should bring to your
feet
The insignia of self you forswore,
Though a god should assever your stronghold complete,
Perchance to lay siege as of yore;
Though you scorn to flinch, nor would yield an inch,
Forget not : freedom called.

As you strangle the ghost of a stinging desire
To finish the battle—or go,
As you rise—with your face to a murderous fire,
And harass the ranks of the foe,—
As you take your breath—with a smile at death,—
Remember : freedom called.

FROM THE WOMEN.

War to the death ; so let it be
 War against custom, greed and pain ;
 War in the face of ease, of gain,
Of every bar to liberty.

War to the world ; because we feel
 That shame and ill are no man's lot ;
 Because we know life's darkest blot
Means toil and time the idle steal.

War to the world. But, in our eyes,
 Our hands, our mind, the Christ complete :
 The passion for each heart we meet
The undaunted love which never dies.

TO THE SPIRIT OF LOVE AND LABOUR.

I struck you from my life. I swore to hate
Your image burnt and scourged into my soul;
For you had changed the world, and past control
I loved you, cursed you, since you came too late.

I swore to trample on the fire you fed,
To wreck each dream your heart or mine had
proved,
I turned in loathing from all sights we loved,
And thrust you unremembered to the dead.

Upon my night there smote the clarion voice
Of labour shouting to her sons asleep;
I flung my lot with theirs who slave, who weep,
Who starve their souls out while the rich rejoice.

In vain; the voice was yours. You hold me yet
By chains of iron, relentless, till I die;
You drew me by the Christ of poverty—
That dream we dream, and never can forget.

The fight is done. No curse of mine will move
That dream, that image from a life's desire;
They conjure me to deeds that taste of fire.
Enough; there is no hate where you are love.

I swear to follow. Draw me evermore
By spell, or passion, to the world you see,
Where man and man are equal, god-like, free,
And labour's flood-storm sweeps from shore to shore.

COURAGE.

Come, then, make light of loss to-day,
Strike off the chains of toil,
Defy the worst ; for best we may
Who rise to spurn the soil.

Press ever onward ; leap the last
Black, sullen shade of care.
The doubt is over, torment past—
We drink diviner air.

There is no mask for love, or hate,
Or passion where we dream :
The truth is truth, nor comes too late,
And joys are what they seem.

Swift, ever swifter ; haste thee, haste,
Look upward, will thy will,
Strike through the dread, degrading waste
Of hunger, sloth and ill.

Mount ever higher ; faith is all,
We reach it ere we die,
No soul on earth was born too small
To dare such ecstasy.

Look never backward. Freedom comes
To sweep our road of wrong.
As human hearts for human homes
We stand to fight: the strong.

Strike for the right to live—and then:
A way no feet have trod
The strength is love's; each heart knows when
To trust the dream of God.



DOUBT.

A Monologue.

- ‘You scorn me. Death? Not I. It is no ghost
Of magic sleep to charm the sense away.
Drink deep and long of this. Drink, desperate host,
Even to the dregs; you have no choice to-day.
- ‘Do you not recognise me? Look once more.
I am the child begotten of your will,
The self you crucified, cast out, forswore,
The creature of a dream which rules you still.
- ‘I am your life unlived, your own proud name
Of long ago, now wasted, lost, undone.
Go! kiss the bride, your poverty. ’Twere shame
To wed such loveliness and starve alone.
- ‘Is she not gentle? Crave you yet the friend
Who turned his back upon you like the rest?
He deems you mad, and prophesies the end.
You wince. Poor fool; the simpler ways are best.
- ‘What though you strive to mitigate earth’s hell
Through one short moment for a hunted hound?
Fight, struggle, suffer, menace and rebel,
Conquer or lose: your slave is ever bound.

What boots it that you flung the cup aside
Of brief, delirious joys, of ease and gain,
To battle with high floods, to breast the tide
Of dark injustices and darker pain?

I shall pursue you. Where you stay I stand
To force my cup upon you, ere you die.
Refuse it; then across your throat my hand
Achieves the torture, since you dare defy.

I have you then. Choose: drink, or know the worst.
Blaspheme the life. No? Then my work begins.
Whose voice was that? Whose form? Hold! Hold
—accurst

Too strong the light! I fall the dreamer
wins.'

A LEGEND OF POVERTY.

They came; they passed—the thronging feet, the
crush

Of human souls. Some wondered what they
missed

While others prayed that through the midnight
hush

Their gifts might bring to them the white-robed
Christ.

The altar, like a star, in trembling gold,
Lit every gift with flame and radiant touch.

No share of mine in praise, or wealth untold:
I had so little where they gave so much.

Poorer than all, what offering could I find
Among life's dust and ashes? Love and ease
I knew not. Love and pain had struck me blind
With tears; my tears . . . how could I part
from these?

I could not sacrifice the last of love:
The undying service of an agony
Which nought of benediction should remove,
No heaven assuage, nor earth-bound joy belie.

Grief held me fast, and yet I had to go.

In very shame, my poverty unknown,
In very love and ecstasy of woe

That can no more, I flung my passion down.

I sought the rest, the thronging forms, the crush

Of aching hearts. I suffered what they missed,
Their pain was mine, then . . . through the
midnight hush,

Across the silence came the white-robed Christ.

He stood beside me. All my love was there:

The human sorrow and the light divine,
Love's world of worship, passion and despair,—
For in his eyes I saw those tears of mine.

MY NEIGHBOUR.

I pass her window every day,
 Before the sun, before the stars,
I meet her on the open way
 Where words defile, where silence jars.

I find her where the city's throng
 Is thickest, quickest, roughest, worst,
I watch her coming : god-like, strong,
 Serene where women are accurst.

I see her when, alone at morn,
 Hope spreads a rose upon her face ;
I see her famished, faint, forlorn,
 Returning hopeless to her place.

I note a fear she cannot hide,
 It strangles her with ghastly hands :
Life's May is sweet, the world is wide,
 And hunger grows she understands

I follow where the stormy lamp
 Cuts finer shadows on the street
I know her footfall in the damp,
 I listen for her loitering feet.



SHE COMES, A STRANGER TO THE NIGHT.
A CHILD IN MIND.

She comes : a stranger to the night,
A child in mind, in form, in haste,
A star resolved to forfeit light
For earth, annihilation, waste.

Her lips more white than driven snows,
Arraign me for the sacrifice ;
Scorn is the only friend she knows,—
I dare not look her in the eyes.

She passes on. I merely think
What matter mine her deadly plight ?
That one soul more should starve, or sink ?
I am no priest, no anchorite.

She passes though all womanhood
Demands from fate, implores of pain
Some other penalty for food,
Only no everlasting stain.

.

I pass her window every day,
Before the sun, before the stars ;
I meet her on the open way
Where words defile, where silence jars.

‘INASMUCH.’

London’s day was slowly dying
From a mean, ungentle street,
When a girl, distracted, flying,
Fell in terror at my feet.

‘Hide me; out of pity, hide me!
He will find me! Save, ah, save!
If his piercing glance descried me,
Shame would hound me to my grave.’

As she spoke, and as the cover
Of a sheltering door we gained,
‘I will cheat,’ I cried, ‘your lover
By your garments torn and stained.

Change them.’ She obeyed. In rapture
She had close my raiment fair;
While—beyond—the brutal capture
Drew me out into the air.

None too soon. They came, pursuing—
Steps more swift than summer cloud,
On they came for my undoing,
Ever nearer and more loud.

All of life rang in their ringing :
Fate and fortune, doom and death.
In mine ears the world was singing,
Shouting lost—I held my breath !

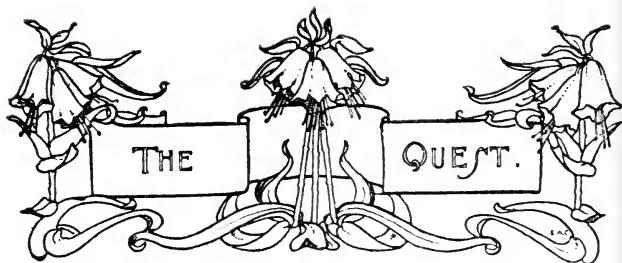
Then I turned. Ye saints in heaven !
What could mean the strange disguise ?
Whose the heart by sorrow riven
Speaking from these love-worn eyes ?

I had dreamt of demon features,
Mocking smile and hands of steel,
Eyes that blind and blast God's creatures
By the hell they make them feel.

But this stranger grave and tender
Brought reproach upon my haste.
Came he then as her defender ?
Whence the maid so roughly chased ?

Piercing through and through, he read me

Then a Voice the silence broke :
'Child of mine, no maiden fled me,
'Twas to me you gave your cloak.'



I sought the spirit who never tires,
Whose face is mirrored in stern desires,
Whose voice and whose soul is love.

I sought the altar of lasting fires,
Where faith is worship, where self aspires
To die for the sake of love.

I found the angel of strong repose,
Whose grief is sorrow for others' woes,
Whose pain is the fruit of love.

I found the presence he only knows
Whose life is lifted by strife and throes
To love—and the heart of love.



I CARE NOT.

I care not how the flowers grow,
Or bloom around my feet,
I care not whether storm-winds blow,
Or summer clouds are fleet ;
To me the earth, the sky, the sea
But joy and beauty wear
As they reflect your love to me,
Your image everywhere.

I know not if the noon be light,
Or hues of morn arise,
To me the stars are ever bright
That burn within your eyes.
I care not whether sorrows fall,
Or fears my way oppress ;
Your tender love would banish all
With one divine caress.

I care not what the future brings,
For you have stooped and given
My dearest hope the silver wings
With which to enter heaven.
Your love is heaven, then come to me,
Or draw me to your shrine,
My worship and my faith shall be
To hold you ever mine.



I CARE NOT HOW THE
FLOWERS GROW
OR BLOOM AROUND MY FEET.

I LOVE YOU.

I love you not because your soul is mine,
Because your life has made my own complete;
I love you not because the voice divine
That called me yours compels me to your feet.

I worship you, because you stand above :
As far removed from me as star from sea,
And more—because the measure of your love
So far exceeds all worthiness in me.

INTO THE LIGHT.

I passed among my flowers
In the night.
They laid their hands upon me ;
Roses red,
And roses faint with ardour,
Crimson, white,
Sprang from their bed.

Across my darkness, blossom,
Thorn and scent,
And wingèd sweetness thronging
Held me fast.
They smote the air with passion,
Fierce intent,
Too fierce to last.

One slender light : half lily,
And half star,
Flashed through a silver silence
From the rest.
She scarcely moved,—I follow
Her afar
By God possessed.

LOVE'S CROWN.

Ah, take them back: the eyes, the lips, the hands,
I may not have love's perfect gift of love,
I may not wear that crown, and scorn the bands
Which hold me slave beyond all wish to move.

Yes; take them back, and give me once again
The air to breathe, the earth to reckon sweet,
Or make me god, unmindful of the chain
That binds my soul forever to thy feet.

REMEMBRANCE.

I crossed your path ; for some brief space
Your life with mine in rapture met,
I read within your perfect face
The soul for which I hunger yet.

I watched your eyes ; through them I proved
Men better than I knew before ;
I watched your lips ; they only moved
To raise my worship more and more.

I recognised the bar that fate
Had laid between your world and mine,
I knew that love had come too late,
No sun upon our way would shine.

And yet we loved. That thought alone
Lent strength and purpose to endure ;
Your heart and spirit were my own,—
The rest was God's : He made you pure.

HOW TO LOVE.

To give, and in the giving
Lay your passion at her feet,
To live, and in the living
Prove your service most complete
Where dying would be rapture,
Since her pity were so sweet.

To dream, and in the dreaming
Find your lode-star in her eyes,
To hold, and in the holding
Feel your perfect heaven lies
Where worship and idolatry
Exalt her to the skies.

AN AWAKENING.

So be it then. 'Twere vain for me to hide
The sinking of my soul, the broken pride
That banish me henceforward from your side.

I understand, at length, what words alone
Can teach the laggard sense; nor glance, nor tone
Fell deep enough to tell me love was done.

I know the worst,—and yet, the past is mine,
I drank, a mortal, of immortal wine,
Because you fail, 'twas none the less divine;—

Because you made of love a fruitless fire,
An agony, a lie, love does not tire,
Love still is love—the angel we desire.

TO LOVE.

O love, thine ardour crowns thee,
Ever-instant, white ;
Worship that may capture
The transcience of delight.

Thy cooler touches wrong thee,
Slow, or swift, or strange,
Thorns of sense, foreboding
Thy crucifixion—change.



I.

When to the region of half-shapen dreams
I find my fancy turning, and my thought,
When with this world of mine contentment seems
A guest forgotten, or a good unsought,—

My sighs are not for love, whose perfect face
Were haply stronger for more constant eyes,
Nor yet for hope, whose pale and fragile grace
The unswerving tenour of her aim belies;—

No, not for these. I sigh that dead and vain
Is every bloom our gratitude would show,
That never voice may breathe, nor speech contain
The just avowal of a debt we owe:

The pangs of dying hope, of scorn and hate
Are small beside a poverty so great.

II.

‘What wish avails when fate a ban has laid
On every hope in love and high desire;
What profiteth where loss and chance have made
Of all we prize a sacrificial fire?’

I knew the voice: ineffable deceit
That fain would level virtue to a stone;
I send my wish, ’tis none the less complete
For idle breath of doubt across it thrown.

May each December bring the deathless dream
Of one ideal loveliness more near,
May life’s unkindest imperfection seem
As naught beside that beauty you revere:

Thus ever, though the lamps of earth die low,
The light is yours which hath no after-glow.

III.

Once more we stand before the rising tide,
The calm or tempest of a year unknown ;
Once more we look on fate and lay aside
A well-worn hope or two we thought our own.

I turn to you. With stern, averted eyes,
With strong, unflinching pride you face the flood ;
No sea-born clamour vexes by surprise
The Titan in your temperament and mood ;

No falsehood hides the quicksand of regret,
No siren voice disturbs your high disdain,
The surging impotence, the force and fret
Of passion break upon your breast in vain.

No future threatens those who once reveal
The heart heroic, and a front of steel.

IV.

I know you rich in friends. I set no store
On garnered memories, a place assigned
For always in the haven of your mind :
Some harbour-right which others earned before.

I would not trespass on your generous thought
As one who, owing much, bemoans his debt ;
I would not personate your least regret,
Though these might win for me a shrine unsought.

One stedfast wish controls me to the end,—
It were enough to hallow all my days,—
To know that where I stood my faith should screen

Your eyes from ill,—that love of mine should lend
To what you most dislike some plea for praise ;—
Were this place mine, I should not think it mean.

V.

When days are dark, and no to-morrows lend
A richer halo for the years to be ;
When flesh and spirit shrink before the end
Of fire and life in pale monotony.

When thoughts are slower, though the heart beat high,
When dreams are sadder for the light they shed,
When all we cling to dies, or seems to die—
Our words unfruitful and our best unsaid,—

One thought, one rare, imperishable truth,
Stronger than all shall dissipate the night,
Shall kindle hope and give us back our youth,
Our passion and equipment for the fight :

Our dreams alone shall last, and live, and move,
Love is their lode-star—and the end is love.

VI.

The light is fading, and another year
Follows with certain feet the uncertain host
Of joys remembered; these too soon are lost
Beside the radiant arms new sorrows bear.

What shall I say to you whose days are swept
By long, invading silences, by thought
The richer for the loss of treasure sought,
The poorer only for all treasure kept.

How shall I bless with words which, ever vain,
Seem vainer now for distance, time and space?
Ah, though I never look upon your face,
I reach you apprehend you once again.

The year is fading, silently, forlorn,
But overhead love's new strong star is born.

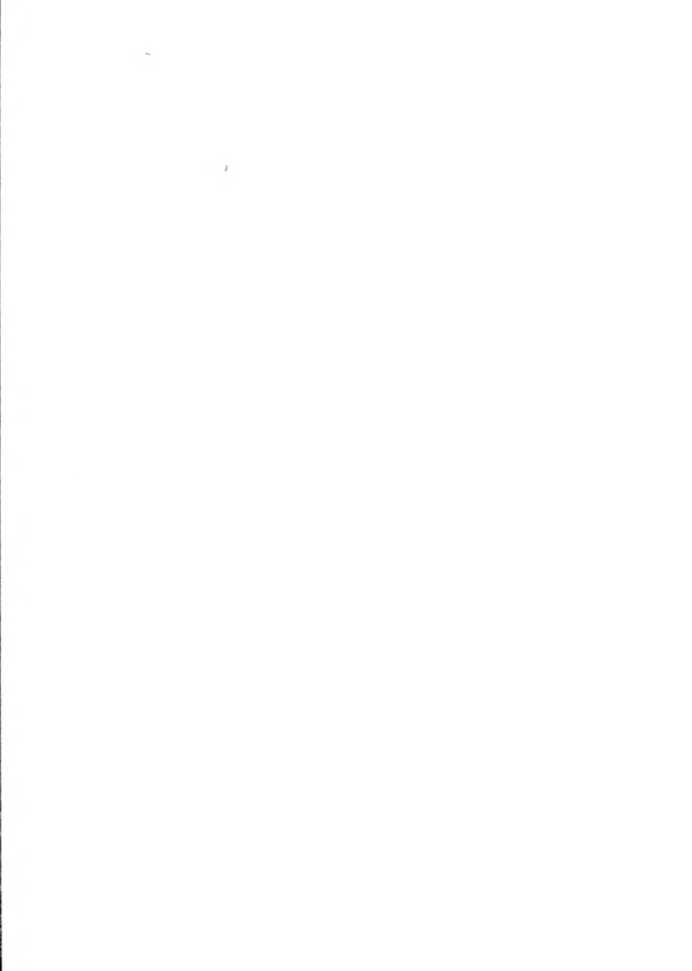
VII.

Here, on the threshold of another day,
Another year of storm, or shade, or sun,
We meet as ever we have met, your way
And mine the nearer for each journey done.

A distance of immeasurable space,
Of separating time between us rolls;
We stand secure, for stronger than all place,
Or circumstance, or lot are stedfast souls.

The sum of life seems less, and, though we shrink
From touch of rough illusion more and more,
There is no death for all we love, or think,
No chance to wreck one thought's immortal store.

We meet again, your courage springs to mine:
The year we look on wears a grace divine.





To
ALFRED J. CALDICOTT, Mus. Bac.
(Obiit Oct. 24th, 1897.)

Death held no terror for thee. Strong and kind,
His fingers snatched thee from the fire and stress,
The fruitless pain of life ; outspread to bless,
His wings now cover thee—in love consigned.
Death has no discord for thee. Pure, complete,
He swept the earth of subtler harmonies—
He loved and took thine own, to realise
An interval more perfect, song more sweet.
We do not grudge thee now the long repose ;
Our days were dearer for thy generous glance,
Our strife less heavy for the true romance
Of thy most knightly deeds to friend and foes.
Thy voice remains. Who loved thee do not weep.
They feel thy music in the silence. Sleep.

TO-MORROW.

'Tis not what we have done that shall atone—

When, at the last, our most will look so mean ;
But what our will has willed, our aim has known,
What hope was ours, and what our dreams have been.

No deeds shall weigh, however full the score,
They have no wings whereby our best shall rise ;
Striving and pain keep watch at heaven's door,
Struggles and tears lie closest to the skies.

Faith that, untired, survived a shattered heart,
Love that essayed to hallow all it gave—
These shall atone, shall testify what part
High purpose made it possible to crave—

These, when they reach the threshold of the day,
Perfect and pure shall stand without dismay.

IF.

If ever, through the level march of days,
Your glance should falter, or your voice grow cold—
If ever, to the parting of our ways
A mood should triumph, and the end be told,
The end of love—the vague, mysterious knot
Which makes the past a stronger whip for scorn
Than slowly ravelled joy that scourges not,
Than passion over-lived, or faith out-worn ;
If ever you should fail, and love forget,
The spirit and the nature of his shrine,
I would not fan faint worship with regret,
Nor seek to warm your dying heart with mine.
No, no. Enough that once you chose my side :
That thought should be my Eden till I died.

DISCONTENT.

When I repent me of the grievous part
My loving plays in this our earnest love ;
When dazed before infinitude of heart
Self alienates the vows I live to prove.

Then, ere extremity undo the band
Of strong unearthliness between our souls,
Ere deadening, smooth idolatry command
The life your godhead pierces and controls—

Suffer, most perfect spirit, that I pray
This love of mine to choose some nobler mind
For habitation, some more lofty way
Of worship than I ever hope to find ;

I cannot reach my love. I only see
The distance of your loveliness from me.

EVERYTHING, OR NOTHING.

As blinded by your loveliness I move,
Too rich to plead for more, too poor to go,
I tremble, lest the anguish of my love
Constrain you to a mood I would not know.
'Twere death to win compassion from your eyes,
To hear a changing music in your voice,
As pity warmed your heart my own would rise
In cold rebellion to undo the choice.
I want your love, no grief-begotten mind
That leaps to tenderness from gathering tears;
I want your love, I would not have you kind,
To trespass on the fruit of sweeter years.
Then spare me not, or trust me with your soul:
That love remains my everlasting goal.

SILENCE.

When silence holds me to her burning heart,
And changes all my world to mystic fire,
When joy no longer seems a dream apart,
And love is more than perishing desire,—

I cross the threshold of a hidden shrine
Which none save worshippers and lovers know,
I see again the sacramental wine :
Life's deep capacity for love and woe ;—

Then, through the stillness, white as flame is white,
A spirit comes—the presence I adore.
It floods the altar with unearthly light
And clothes me with his godhead evermore.

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Henceforth my lips are sealed, but in mine eyes
I bear the memory of that paradise.



I reckon as little of my hope forlorn,
Beside your fair, untravelled ecstasy,
As dream-god, deep in midnight revelry,
Fears death and cold from heavy-hearted morn.

You stand aloof. Forever to aspire
I think you mine: forever yours to be
I feel you far beyond the best in me—
My perfect, unattainable desire.

I would not have you nearer, I would place
A world between the arena of my strife
And your defiant, settled loveliness.

Thank God you never stoop. I know the face,
The soul of her I love. No earthlier life
Shall cloak the spirit of that faithfulness.

THE BIRTH-DAY.

(To Elsie, Oct. 27th, 1898.)

Love laid his hand upon me. Since that day
I move more reverently among my kind.
I know a surer, a diviner way
To every throbbing heart and vexèd mind.

Since Love was with me, I have ceased to fight
As one who barter all to win or lose,
As one who blindly struggles to the light,
Or seems to murmur where he may not choose.

Since Love o'ershadowed me with radiant wings,
And laid his lips upon my quivering soul,
I fear no longer ; every moment brings
Its deeper sense of Love's triumphant goal.

Love set his seal upon me. All my days
Are his—my thoughts, my silence, and my praise.

A CONSIDERATION.

Since you and I a two-fold harvest reap
Of present joy and sweeter memories,
Since all my dreams upon your bosom sleep,
And all your love beyond my dreaming lies,
Since you, and only you, my heart may move,
Or of my soul a happy prisoner make,
Since I, and only I, to you may prove
Love's world the richer for our love awake;—
Trust me, nor from the music of our mind
Suffer one harmony that now rings true
To break or fail, or change. All that you find
Of love in me is love resolved through you.
Since, therefore, you and I this love create,
Fortune may harm us not, nor time nor fate.

TO ENGLAND.

Almighty England, by the lofty grace
Of lofty deeds for which we bless thy name,
By all our pride in thee of years and days,
Suffer no child of thine to feel thy shame.

For, in our ears the moment rings at last
A withering message over land and sea :
'England, the vaunted justice of the past,
Has slaves at home she hesitates to free.'

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Where did thy daring dreams for freedom die?
Whence this benumbing fear to face the foe?
Thy people look to thee for liberty,
But liberty to starve is all they know.

Under the cover of a fair disguise,
The fiend of hunger hangs about thy streets,
He steals the loveliness from little eyes,
And grips the soul of everyone he meets.

England, what boots it, though thy shores be wide,
Though half the world should bow to thy decrees,
If, while thy bosom swells with lawful pride,
One little child is starving at thy knees?

What is thine intellect, thy learning worth?
What are those books by which we set such store,
When from the cursèd homes which gave them birth
Thy children, fainting, reach the schoolroom door?

How shall they bloom who know not how to thrive?
How shall they learn, half sick, half drest, half dead?
Out of thy mercy bid them come and live;
England, awake! and give thy children bread.

And of thine armaments, thy ceaseless care,
Never to be surprised by foe or friend?
Thy lavish, vast equipments everywhere—
Boundless should be thy measures to defend.

Yet, in thy midst, a girl who toils and frets
To work for England and her right to earn,
Shall seldom rise above the damning debts
Of rent and food wherever she may turn.

What shall it profit thee, though all the gold
Of other countries fills thy coffers' need,
As long as English girls are bought and sold
Upon the market of industrial greed?

They dare not strike, the master rules the slave,
They may not join the ranks of those who fight,
The penalty is heavier than the grave:
Banished, forgotten, cast upon the night.

There, in the dark, when hell is on the street,
When England's daughters perish one by one,
Where shall thy stronghold be for their defeat?
Where are thy forces as they sink undone?

Not all the shining armies of the world,
Not all the silver victories of her day,
Would speak for England as one javelin hurled
On that foul spot to smite it clean away.

And of thy passion to wax proud and great,
To hold thy grand possessions east and west,—
What shall these bring when, stricken desperate,
Thy flesh and blood at home are dispossessed?

Turn, valiant England, to these men—thy sons.

They ask for homes that may be always theirs,
Some certain shelter for their helpless ones,
Worn by the pressure of ignoble cares.

They ask for time to fill those homes with ease,
They ask for light to burn the lamp within,
They ask for fire to make indifference peace,
To keep the threshold free from cold and sin.

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Strike off the chains! O set thy people free!
Give them their dreams, they will not serve thee less.
Out of thy love for them thy wealth shall be,
Thy just possession and thy happiness.

Grant this, O England, by thy generous fires,
By that unrivalled genius we adore;
Comfort thy people with their hearts' desires,
And hold their honour thine for evermore.



Acknowledgment and thanks—for
permission to reprint some of these
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To Paul Bevan,

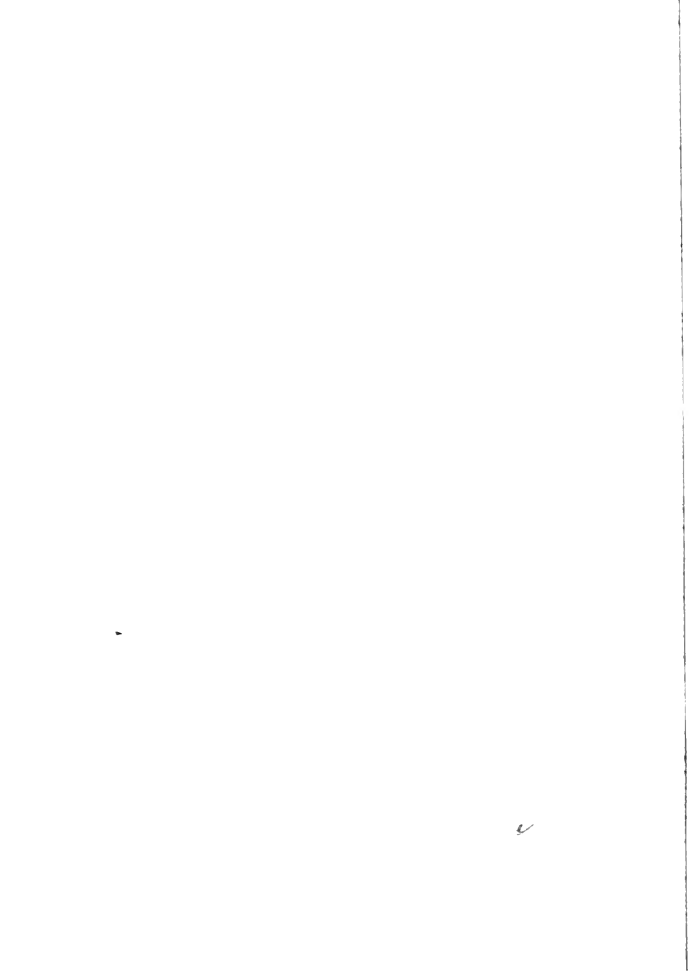
John C. Kenworthy,

The Editor of the Mansfield House
Magazine,

The Editors of 'Atalanta' and . . .
'The Clarion,'

and, above all, to

The Manchester Labour Press Society.









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